



CISA INSIGHTS

COVID-19 Disinformation Activity



False and misleading information related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) are a significant challenge. This CISA Insight provides an overview of coronavirus disinformation and steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of sharing inaccurate information with your friends and family.

COVID-19 DISINFORMATION

After the initial outbreak of COVID-19, disinformation campaigns appeared online. Information manipulation and fabrication about COVID-19's origin, scale, government response, and/or prevention and treatment surged as creators leveraged people's increased uncertainty.

Virus Origin

China and other authoritarian governments have promoted false claims about the origins of the virus in an attempt to shift blame overseas and divide free societies against themselves. Common tactics they use include censoring news, injecting false narratives onto social media platforms, and promoting slick government-produced videos.

Virus Scale

Chinese state-backed media continue to promote content emphasizing China's claimed success rapidly controlling the virus, while suggesting the U.S. and other Western countries have failed in their response. These narratives are amplified on a variety of social media platforms.

5G and COVID

Disinformation campaigns have promoted false narratives that 5G technology suppresses immune systems and that 5G spectrum bands spread the virus.

Government Response to COVID-19

Disinformation involving the government's response to COVID-19 has been circulated to cause confusion among Americans, including false claims the National Guard Bureau would be supporting nationwide quarantines.

Prevention and Treatment of COVID-19

False information about COVID-19 treatments continue to circulate on social media, including potentially extremely harmful suggestions to drink bleach or chlorine dioxide, to use vitamin C or boiled garlic, or that illicit drug activity can "cure" the virus.

PROTECT YOURSELF

There are simple steps you can take to minimize the likelihood of amplifying disinformation.

1. Go to trusted sources of information like www.Coronavirus.gov. FEMA has also established a coronavirus rumor control website at www.FEMA.gov/coronavirus/rumor-control where you can learn more about specific disinformation campaigns.
2. Check the **source of the information**.
3. **Search for other reliable sources** of information on the issue.
4. **Think before you link** – take a moment to let your emotions cool down before sharing anything online.

CISA'S ROLE AS THE NATION'S RISK ADVISOR

CISA collaborates with industry and government partners to help organizations understand and counter critical infrastructure and cybersecurity risks associated with the malicious activities of nation-state and non-state actors. CISA provides recommendations to help partners stay vigilant and protected against potential foreign influence operations.

Contact Information:

CISA.gov has more information about COVID-19, as well as information on identifying and combatting disinformation. We ask that anyone with any relevant information, or indication of a compromise, contact us immediately.